

Pakatan says ready to rule Malaysia
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By Mohd Farhan Darwis

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 19 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) leaders are convinced of their fitness to govern the country if Barisan Nasional (BN) loses hold of Putrajaya in the coming polls, pointing to their achievements in the four states they currently lead.

The three-party pact of DAP, PKR and PAS now administer the states of Selangor, Penang, Kedah and Kelantan, following their historic electoral performance in Election 2008 when they denied BN its customary two-thirds parliamentary majority.

DAP publicity secretary Tony Pua noted that in 2008, PR had not expected to make the gains it did, much less being voted into four state administrations.

“But we succeeded,” he said. “Now, we are really ready and that is proof that we are ready to rule.”

Today, the Petaling Jaya Utara MP added that it PR will be judged based on its policies and not just the personalities behind them.

“The policies are more important... it does not matter who becomes a minister, it is the policy (that matters),” he said.

“It doesn’t matter who is elected (from PR), we are definitely much better (than BN).”

In a forum on Sunday, several political observers questioned PR’s readiness to rule the country if it wins the coming polls, saying that there were many unresolved issues that could blight the pact’s performance.

The observers pointed to the protracted and unresolved dispute between Islamist party PAS and secular DAP over the formation of an Islamic state and implementation of hudud law, a contentious topic in Muslim-majority but secular Malaysia.

Lawyer Andrew Khoo pointed out that PR has also not formed a “shadow Cabinet” to indicate their suggested replacements for the current BN administration, saying this restricts the pact’s credibility and confidence in its readiness to govern.

“Although they have a common policy in Buku Jingga... (the) inability or reluctance of PR to form a shadow Cabinet... has meant they are unable to articulate what their policy is going to be,” he had said.

Like Pua, PAS vice-president Salahuddin Ayub also disagreed with the observers and recounted PR’s achievements in the states it governs as an example of the pact’s ability.

He said PR’s track record was strong enough to dispel doubts over the abilities of its leaders, even if they have never governed the entire country.

"I feel what is more important is our integrity and our track record... these are the most valuable assets that the PR governments have shown they possess.

"We have produced many qualified leaders who can be trusted... no misappropriation or abuse like leaders from BN," said the Kubang Kerian MP, adding that he was proud of PR's mentri besars and chief minister.

"For three consecutive years, the Auditor-General's Report has proven that we have governed well," he said.

Agreeing with her colleagues, PKR vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar said that not only did PR's track record prove its competence, the pact's joint manifesto has also bound all three parties together and shown that they are a united front.

"World history and democracies have shown that it is the wants and choices of the people that will decide who should be given the mandate to rule.

"If the people's aspirations are not fulfilled, the people will be the judge and select a replacement... on national level, almost all policies and issues of PR have been used by BN," she said.

The BN coalition has been the only federal government since the country was formed, having previously ruled as the Alliance Party.

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